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Subject: [External] [RHG - ENR] The Real Electricity Reliability Crisis

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The Real Electricity Reliability Crisis

Last Friday, US Energy Secretary Rick Perry asked the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) to intervene in wholesale markets to help keep coal and nuclear power plants online. The argument laid out in this Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NOPR), is that these sources of baseload power generation, which have been under pressure from weak load growth, cheap natural gas and expanding renewables, have unique value to grid reliability because they can store significant quantities of fuel onsite. We dug through DOE's own reliability data to stress-test Secretary Perry's concern about fuel supply security warrants aggressive FERC action. Of all the major power disruptions, nation-wide over the past five years, only 0.0007% were due to fuel supply problems. The vast majority were the result of severe weather knocking down power lines, like in Puerto Rico where Hurricane Maria caused more customer-hours of electricity delivery to be lost over the past 12 days than in last year in the rest of the country combined.

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